

ROYAL VISIT TO GUILDHALL.

"————— Towards three or four o'clock,
Look for the news, that the Guildhall affords."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE citizens of London have been celebrated from the most ancient periods of their history, for their hospitality and love of good cheer. This epicurean character has not left them, nor, we hope, will it leave them, whilst Guildhall stands, and London Stone endures. Their chief magistrate holds of ancient right the office of chief butler of the realm, an office that has been contested by the chief magistrate of the ancient city of Winchester; whose measures to obtain this honourable distinction failed of success, and it was yielded to the citizens; who, ever since the coronation of Richard I., in 1189, when Henry Fitz Alwyn, then chief magistrate, held that honourable situation, have claimed it by prescription. The post is both honourable to the city, as it is an acknowledgment of their taste in affairs of the vintry, and lucrative to their *prætor*, as it confers the distinguished honour of presenting wine to the king, in a golden cup, at his coronation festival, and the perquisite of retaining it, together with an ewer of the same metal.

The town rings with nothing but the King's visit to the Lord Mayor. The procession is to leave the city some hours earlier than usual, as the King prefers eating his dinner at the sensible hour of four, instead of the stomach-tiring hour of seven; and His Majesty wishes to see the merry good-humoured faces of his subjects by daylight, if daylight may be expected in London on a Lord Mayor's day.

The arrangements partake of the twofold natures of the annual Lord Mayor's feasts, and of the occasional banquets given by this magnificent corporation to their monarchs, and other crowned heads.

On the celebrated occasion of the dinner to his late Majesty, when Prince Regent of these realms, with their Imperial and Royal Majesties the Emperor of all the Russias, and the King of Prussia, on the 18th of June, 1814, the hall had a row of galleries on each side, covered with scarlet draperies, for the accommodation of ladies only; as the ladies of the common

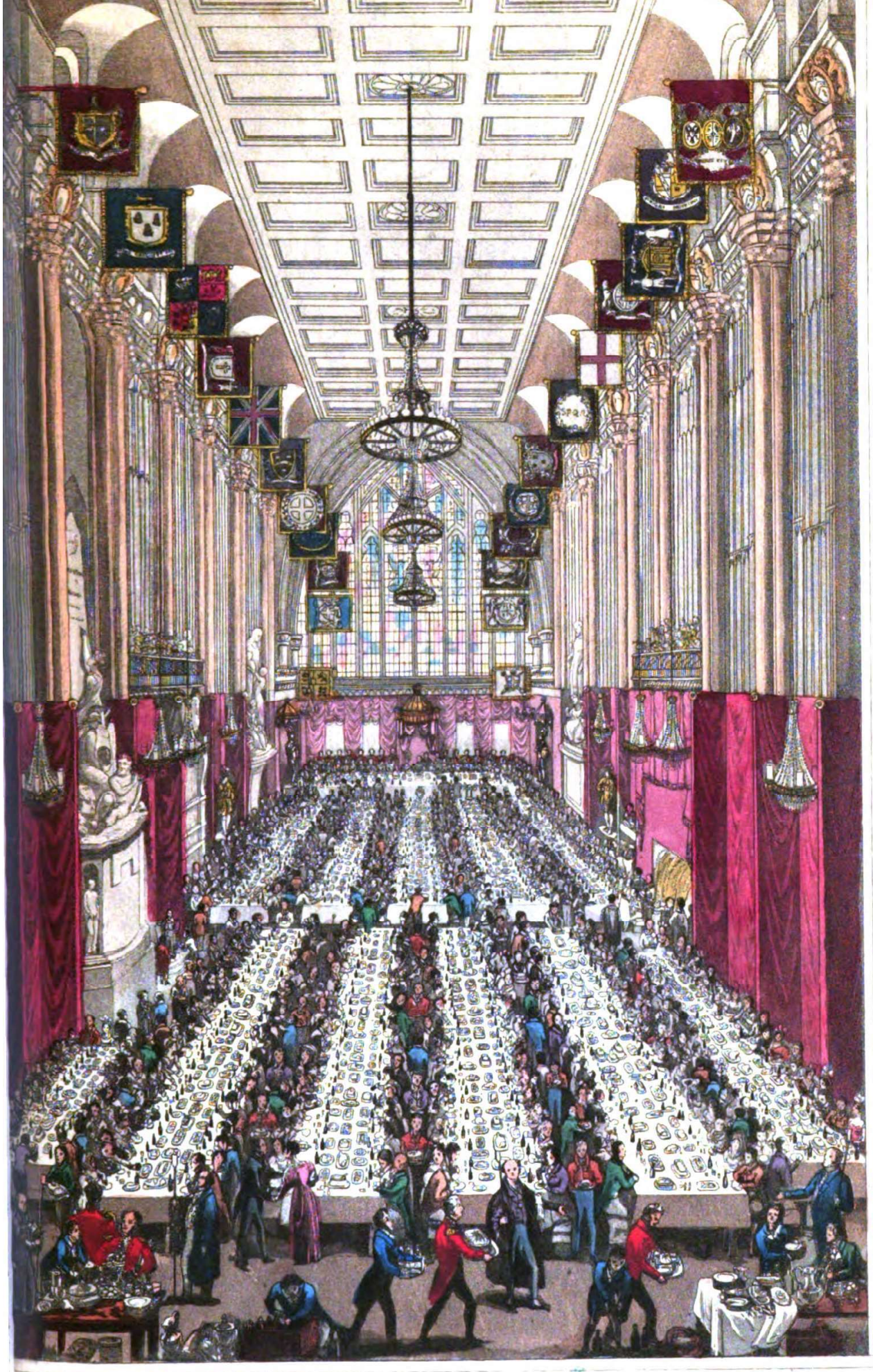
council were ungallantly denied the privilege of eating and drinking with their lords on that occasion. On the present opportunity they will have the honour of dining with their King and Queen, and ladies and drawing-rooms will come once more into fashion, as well as earlier and healthier hours. Two grand dinners were given by the corporation in that year, namely, the abovenamed on the 18th of June, and another to the Duke of Wellington on the 9th of July following. The fittings up of the hall of course answered for both entertainments, which cost together, very little short of £30,000.

The hall will be laid out precisely as represented in the plate. A table is laid along the hustings across the eastern end of the hall, at which the royal party will be accommodated. In the centre, under the eastern window, is erected a throne for the King and Queen, over which is a canopy; and every care has been taken—although the city architect would not go up a ladder to examine it for five hundred pounds—to prevent the recurrence of an accident, similar to that which occurred the last time our Sovereign dined within its walls, when he was *anointed*, not only before his coronation, but before his accession to the throne.

Over this throne, the gorgeous eastern window, which is resplendent with painted glass, representing the royal arms, and the stars and insignia of the noble and knightly orders of the Garter, the Bath, St. Patrick, and the Thistle, will be lighted with gas from without, as will the western window, which is similarly emblazoned with the arms of the city, and other civic emblems.

The royal table will display a magnificent service of plate, and be covered with a profusion of the daintiest fare.

The rest of the tables will be splendidly decked, and if they will not display the unique taste of Wattier, in his inimitable spreads at Carlton House (for who could hope to equal them?) they will be worthy of the opulent city which provides, and of their representatives who will partake.



*Representative of the Interior of GUILDHALL on the occasion of the Visit of the
KING & QUEEN at the inauguration of the new A.D. 1855.*

The hall will be lighted by gas through the medium of magnificent chandeliers, which will throw a daylike flood of light over the clustered pillars of old Knolles, capped with the ancient armorial bearings of the twelve principal companies of the city, and upon the modern monuments erected by the grateful citizens of London to the elder and the younger Pitt, to the heroic Nelson, and to the patriotic Beckford; and bring out all the classical beauties of those terrific twins, the gigantic Gog and Magog.

The marble monuments are covered, on this occasion, with a preparation of pipe-clay and other materials, that give a Parian whiteness of colour, and flatness of surface, highly serviceable to their effect, by such a light as they will then be exhibited. Over the stairs that lead from the north side of the hall to the council chamber, a new gallery has been constructed for an orchestra.

The outside of the hall is protected by ample barriers, for the convenience of the royal and noble personages who are invited. The ancient porch under the library, will be decorated with shrubs and flowers, and the company will be ushered into the hall, and the royal suite into the council-chamber, till the arrival of the King and Queen, and the necessary introductions into the drawing-room. Till that period, the gas will be kept low, and the hall, and all its gay decorations, and the magnificent painted windows, will appear indistinct, and in a demi-tint. But at the moment of the entry of the royal guests, it will burst out, as if by magic, into its utmost brilliancy.

The pictures that decorated the council chamber have all been taken down, carefully cleaned, and newly varnished, and their frames newly gilt. The walls and graceful cupola of this elegantly-proportioned room, have been fresh painted in destemper, to avoid the smell of oil; and His Majesty will be gratified on entering it, to see one of the finest statues of modern times, erected to the memory of his revered father, George III., from the chisel of Chantry; a faithful likeness of his heroic friend Nelson, by Sir William Beechey; a fine bust of the same hero by the Hon. Mrs. Damer; various views of the siege, defence, and relief of Gibraltar,

and of the naval victory, in which he himself bore a part, under Lord Rodney, over the French fleet, commanded by Count de Grasse, painted by Paton and Dodd; the large historical picture of Lord Heathfield, and the destruction of the floating batteries before Gibraltar, by the late John Singleton Copley, Esq., R.A., father of the present Lord Chancellor; portraits of his naval friends Lords Howe, Duncan, and St. Vincent, and of some citizens who have done honour to the name, as the liberal-minded Boydell, who presented many of these pictures, the venerable Daniel Pinder, in his time the father of the Common Council, and the mild and venerable Chamberlain Clarke, now in his 92d year. There are also, the death of Wat Tyler, in Smithfield, by William Walworth; the murder of David Rizzio, and other fine pictures. One, the swearing in of Alderman Newnham, in 1782, containing 120 portraits, must not be forgotten, not so much for its merits, which for its subject are really great, but for an answer old Wolcot (Peter Pindar) gave to Alderman Boydell, for whom it was painted. The picture was in technical language *chilled*; that is, the varnish had got opaque through cold and damp. The worthy Alderman, who was rubbing it with his silk pocket-handkerchief, a process that will sometimes bring out the colours, said rather peevishly, "Dear me, doctor," for Wolcot was a very decent painter, "what varnish is the best to *bring out* these figures?" rubbing briskly over the court of Aldermen. "Turtle-soup," roughly replied the satirist.

All these pictures—and extraordinarily good ones they are, of the British school, by Reynolds, Copley, Beechey, Westall, Gavin Hamilton, Northcote, Lawrence, Abbott, Opie, Paton, Dodd, and Lonsdale—will look their best by the gas-light chandelier in the centre, and will be scarcely a less interesting exhibition as a gallery of works of art, than those at the British Institution, when exhibited by gas-light to the brilliant dress-parties of the nobility and gentry, friends of the directors.

The waiting-room, the Lord Mayor's court, the Chamberlain's parlour, are all fitted up for refreshments, cards, and retiring-rooms for the ladies, whilst the

council chambers, old and new, will be arranged for dancing.

The new Lord Mayor, John Key, Esq., citizen and stationer, who was elected Alderman of the ward of Langbourn on the 8th of April, 1823, and served Sheriff with Alderman Brown, in 1824, it is expected will, according to precedent, be presented with a patent of Baronetcy; and the two Sheriffs, Chapman Marshall and John Poland, Esqrs., be knighted.

The citizens of London have been celebrated throughout their history for the magnificence and splendour of their entertainments to their sovereigns and illustrious foreigners.

They thus received, and in conjunction with the leading nobility and gentry of England, acknowledged William the Norman, and treated him with hospitable splendour, receiving from him, at the intercession of William, Bishop of London, a charter in their own language, which is still preserved as a jewel, in the city archives.

In 1205 they splendidly entertained King John, who had added to their privileges, and his nephew, the Emperor Otho, in a most magnificent and princely manner. During the contest between John and his baronial subjects, the citizens took part with the rest of the barons, and gave a splendid reception and entertainment to their ally Louis, King of France.

About the year 1244, in the reign of Henry III., Beatria, Countess of Provence, mother to the Queen of England, paid a visit to this kingdom, and was received by the citizens of London with great splendour and magnificence; and at the nuptials of her daughter Cincia, with Richard, the King's brother, Matthew Paris relates there were thirty thousand dishes at the wedding dinner.

At the accession of Edward I. the citizens received their new King on his arrival in the city, with the greatest pomp and magnificence. The outsides of the houses were hung with the richest silks and tapestry; the conduits were supplied with the choicest wines, and the most wealthy citizens, says Hollinshed's chronicle, scattered gold and silver among the populace. The citizens also received Edward II. at the beginning of his reign

in 1308, with equal splendour, but resisted his arbitrary measures.

Towards the latter part of the long reign of Edward III., although he was then by no means in high favour with his good citizens of London, they entertained the Princess of Wales, her son Richard (afterwards the unhappy Richard II.), and their attendants, with a splendid masquerade, and in the guise of throwing with dice, contrived so that the courtiers always won: they thus presented them with cups of gold, rings, and other valuables.

In 1392, they received, and splendidly entertained King Richard II.; and on his arrival at Sheen, he was met by four hundred citizens on horseback, richly dressed, with the Recorder at their head, who entreated His Majesty to honour his chamber of London with his presence. On his Majesty acceding to their request, they attended him to London Bridge, where he was presented with a stately courser, richly trapped with gold brocade, and his Queen with a beautiful white pad, caparisoned with rich furniture. Never, it is said, was the city so richly embellished as on this occasion; for the citizens of all ranks vied with each other for the honour and entertainment of their sovereign; and all the streets through which the cavalcade passed, were lined by the city companies in their formalities. The conduits ran with varieties of wines, and the populace, with loud acclamations, kept incessantly crying, "King Richard for ever!" The pageants at Cheapside, St. Paul's, and other places, were very splendid; and the King was accompanied on his return to his palace at Westminster, by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs, who, on the following day, made him and his Queen presents of great value.

Lord Mayor's day in 1415 was rendered celebrated by the arrival of the news of Henry the Fifth's great victory over the French at Agincourt, which was communicated to Nicholas Wotton, as he was going to Westminster to be sworn in as Mayor. The King soon after returning from France, with great numbers of the French nobility, his prisoners, was met on Blackheath, by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs of London, in scarlet robes, attended by three hundred of the principal

citizens, on horseback, richly accoutred. During this magnificent cavalcade, the city conduits poured forth wine, and the Mayor, Aldermen, and citizens, presented the King with one thousand pounds in gold, in two rich basins of the same metal and value.

The citizens also, in 1416, received the Emperor Sigismund, who came to England to make peace between England and France, in the like magnificent manner. They met him on the 7th of May, at Blackheath, and accompanied him to Southwark, where the united cavalcade was met by the King and his principal nobility, who were conducted by the Mayor, Aldermen, and citizens, and entertained in a gorgeous manner.

After the signal battle of Bosworth Field, the citizens went out in crowds to Hornsey, to welcome the new monarch Henry VII., who was met at Highgate by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, in scarlet robes, and a great number of citizens in violet silk gowns, and at Shoreditch by the city companies. He proceeded to St. Paul's, and deposited the captured standards, and returned public thanks to God for his victory.

On Twelfth Day, 1494, Henry VII. gave an elegant entertainment to the Mayor, Aldermen, and principal citizens, at Westminster, and knighted Ralph Austrey, the Mayor.

The citizens also subsequently entertained their Majesties Queen Elizabeth, King James I., and his family, two or three times, when they employed Ben Jonson as their poet, and Inigo Jones as their architect. Also, King Charles II., on his coronation, when they erected triumphal arches, and built the present Gog and Magog. Of these many cotemporary accounts were published, copies of which are in the library at Guildhall.

The approaching entertainment will probably surpass in splendour that which was given to the late King, when Prince Regent, with the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, the Duke of Wellington, Marshal Blucher, and other heroes of Waterloo, on the 18th of June, 1814. On that occasion, the royal party consisted of twenty-four individuals, occupying a table by themselves, at the upper end of the Hall: this year, the same form of

arrangement is adopted; but the number of guests at their Majesties' table will be only sixteen, unless, in consequence of late applications, the number may be extended to eighteen. On the royal table, the new Lord Mayor, in virtue of his office, will have the honour of placing the first dish; after which he will have the still higher honour of conducting their Majesties to their seats.

Four tables, placed longitudinally at the upper end of the Hall, will accommodate seventy-three ladies and gentlemen each; and, at the lower end, four other long tables will accommodate seventy-five each. At one of the former, it is understood, the British and Foreign Ministers will dine. At five side tables, of different lengths, room will be found for from eighty to a hundred more persons. This completed the arrangement in the Hall, as originally proposed; but it was afterwards found necessary to introduce a cross table at the bottom, with thirty or forty additional seats. The total number of guests invited is from 750 to 800.

Mr. Leech, the proprietor of the London Coffee House, provides the entire dinner; but every thing prepared for the royal table will be under the superintendence of His Majesty's own cook.

The Bill of Fare is rich, extensive, and in every respect calculated both to excite and gratify the palates of Englishmen. Its transcript would occupy several pages of *LA BELLE ASSEMBLEE*; but we may mention that it embraces 200 tureens of turtle, of five pints each; 50 dishes of chickens and pullets; 50 capons; 70 turkeys, boiled and roast; 45 hams; 30 tongues; 17 rumps, 3 rounds, 2 barons, 3 sirloins, and 3 pieces of ribs of beef; 105 dishes of game; 50 dishes of wild fowl; 36 dishes of fish; 45 pigeon and raised pies; 50 dishes of mince-pies; 30 marrow puddings; 40 fruit tarts; 105 jellies and creams; 120 dishes of brocoli, potatoes, &c.; 160 pounds' weight of pine-apples; 150 dishes of hot-house grapes; 140 dishes of apples, pears, and walnuts; 100 ornamented cakes, &c.; 100 dishes of dried fruit and preserves; 200 ice-creams, &c.

To render the history of this grand visit complete, we shall next month, if requisite, insert a few additional particulars.